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TITLE: Telephone Support During Overseas Deployment for Military Spouses

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<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>				
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> <p>Deployment impacts both service member and family, and the cost can be high. Spouses' reactions to deployment may include emotional distress, loneliness, anticipatory fear or grief, somatic complaints, and depression. The goal is to help spouses learn ways to manage stress and solve problems related to deployment and reintegration, communication, managing long distance relationships, and other common problems. The study will compare telephone support groups to online education sessions. The study will enroll 160 spouses, 13 to date. In the Telephone Support groups, a group leader and participants will meet 12 times over six months to focus on education, skills building and support. Education Only online sessions will provide the same education content, without skills building or support. Content includes strategies to reduce or eliminate communication difficulties during deployment, how to find help; practical concerns during deployment; fostering resilience and decreasing stress; fostering relationships while apart, negotiating roles and relationships; changes during deployment; strategies to support the spouse and the service member; and cues to alert spouses when to seek mental health services for the family or themselves. Outcomes will include resilience, depression, anxiety and coping behaviors.</p> <p>Telephone data collection will be conducted at baseline, six and twelve months.</p>				
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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Deployment impacts both service member and family, and the cost can be high. Spouses' reactions to deployment may include emotional distress, loneliness, anticipatory fear or grief, somatic complaints, and depression. Spouses may also be stressed by single-parenting, learning skills such as home repairs, making decisions alone, and lack of communication with the service member. Assistance during deployment can also help with reintegration post deployment. This randomized clinical trial will examine two interventions designed to help spouses manage deployment and prepare for reintegration. The study will enroll 160 spouses, 13 to date. In the Telephone Support groups, a group leader and participants will meet 12 times over six months to focus on education, skills building and support. Education Only online sessions will provide the same education content, without skills building or support. Outcomes will include resilience, depression, anxiety, and coping behaviors.

## **BODY:**

### **Task 1: Develop Manual of Operations (MOP) Months 1-6, April 2011-September 2011**

All activities and products are completed for the Manual of Operations.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Products</u>
• Finalize support group format	• Support group format, topics and scripts
• Finalize support group materials	• Spouse Workbooks and information
• Finalize education group sessions	• Education group format, topics and scripts
• Finalize screening materials	• Screening forms and scripts
• Finalize data collection protocol/battery	• Data collection forms, scripts and documentation
• Develop and print brochures and posters	• Brochures and posters

### **Task 2: IRB approval**

### **Months 1-6, April 2011-September 2011**

All activities and products are completed for IRB approval. Final Memphis IRB approval was received January 25, 2011 and HRPO approval was received on December 14, 2011.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Products</u>
• Develop informed consent documents	• Approved consent

### **Task 3: Hire and train personnel**

### **Months 1-5, April 2011-August 2011**

All staff trained and certified.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Products</u>
• Write job descriptions, interview, hire, train	• Trained and certified staff

### **Task 4: Recruitment and Randomization**

### **Months 7-25, October 2011-April 2013**

Recruitment began January 09, 2012. Email announcements have been sent to Guard, Reserve, and Active Duty contacts. The Spouse Support website, Facebook entry, and email contact are all available. See Appendix for URLs.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Current Products</u>
• Work with recruitment sources • Telephone and screen potential participants • Randomize participants	• Recruitment sources contacted • 17 spouses screened • 13 participants randomized

**Task 5: Intervention (Telephone Groups)      Months 7-37, October 2011-April 2014**  
Telephone support/discussion groups began February 13, 2012.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Current Products</u>
• Schedule and provide groups for intervention participants	• Three groups ongoing

**Task 6: Attention Control (Education Groups)   Months 7-37, October 2011-April 2014**  
Education webinar groups began February 13, 2012.

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Current Products</u>
• Schedule and provide sessions for education participants	• Fourth session posted online

**Task 7-9: Data Collection/Data Entry/Cleaning   Months 7-42, October 2011-September 2014**

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Current Products</u>
• Collect full data at baseline, six and twelve months • Collect partial data at three and nine months • Enter and clean data	• 13 baselines collected

**KEY RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** None to date.

**REPORTABLE OUTCOMES:** None to date.

**CONCLUSION:**

Several spouses with service members who are deployed to other areas (e.g., Kuwait) have called us wishing to participate. With the withdrawal of troops from Iraq, this would likely be a good plan. Thus, we changed the name of the study to a more generic title that reflects the multiple deployments American personnel may experience.

**REFERENCES and SUPPORTING DATA:** N/A

**APPENDICES:**

**Spouse Deployed media**

Email: [vhamemsbm@va.gov](mailto:vhamemsbm@va.gov)

Website: [www.memphis.va.gov/spousesupport](http://www.memphis.va.gov/spousesupport)